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IS C. D. COMPANY DIVERTING COLORADO RIVER INTO SALTON SEA?

(By Benjamin Franklin Fly)

"Chief Engineer Chas. G. Frisbie, of the Imperial Laguna water company," was in Yuma yesterday and paid a call at the Yuma Daily Examiner office to get an extra copy of the "free write-up" I gave his "company" the day after three of the "boosters" for his "high line canal" scheme appeared before the board of governors of the Yuma county water users' association asking the latter to indorse the so-called Kettner bill in Congress.

The "chief engineer" proved to be a very affable broadminded, good-natured young gentleman of about 25 or 28 years of age, and greatly interested me in what he says is an absolute fact, viz:

That there is even now more than enough water (3200 second-feet) flowing down the Colorado river to water every acre under that company's system, enough to water the entire Yuma project, and still have enough left to furnish his company with all the water it will need for its 216,000 acres!

That's going some, I bound you!

The statement was so amazing that I pressed him for further light, for it has been stated to me time and time again during the present irrigating season that the Imperial valley has had such a limited supply of water that every gallon of it was used to some good purpose.

Imagine my consternation, if you can, when Mr. Chief Engineer Frisbie asserted with a positiveness born only of one who absolutely knows, that "the river has had more

water all summer, and has more water now than all of us could or can use"!

"I am familiar with the entire C. D. company system," declared the "high line chief engineer," "and I know what I am talking about. Not only that, but officers of the various water companies of the C. D. company have given me data on the exact amount of water they actually use, as well as the exact amount they actually require, and this data shows that there is much more water in the river than all of us need."

"Then why did the C. D. company dam up the river at the Algodones heading in order to divert every drop of water in the river into their canal?" I asked, in astonishment.

"In order, apparently, that they may lay claim to that much water when they open up an additional 400,000 acre tract in Mexico—that and nothing more," replied the "chief engineer."

"If they are not using all of the water they now divert from the Colorado, what do they do with the other part?" I asked.

"Spill it into the Salton Sea just as they have always been doing," was the prompt reply.

"You don't mean to state that as a fact, do you?" I asked, more amazed than ever.

"I certainly do, and I am here now to go to their diversion dam and then follow the water right on down to where most of it is emptied into the Salton Sea," replied the chief engineer of the "high line canal."

"So you think there is plenty of water in the Colorado at the present time to water the Yuma project, the C. D. company's system, and still have enough for your company's 216,000 acres?" I asked.

"I know there is, for I know how much water is being wasted by the C. D. company," he replied.

Then we branched off on his figures as to the cost of his proposed "high line canal," and I found him both interesting and good natured, telling me to "fire away" whenever I couldn't agree with him, which made me think a whole lot more of him than if he had "got hot under the collar" like some of the thin-skin individuals here in Yuma, who are badly mixed up in "Ordinance No. 4."

But now let's go back to that diversion dam, and see what Mr. Chief Engineer Frisbie has brought to light—providing, of course, that he really knows what he is talking about.

If the C. D. company really has more water than it has use for, WHY did it dam up the river so that not even one drop of water passes below the dam?

By so doing, thousands upon thousands of pounds, aye, tons of salmon and other valuable food fish have been killed—fish enough, as I said the other day, to feed the European army—for a little while, at least. The banks, holes of stagnant water, the very bed of the river itself, all the way down from the dam to the sea (so I am informed) is lined with dead fish!

They were so thick just below the dam immediately after the dam was completed from bank to bank, that the stench was something awful—in fact, the workmen had to cease work on the dam in order to bury the putrid mass of dead fish.

If all this water was shut off, just for the fun of running the Colorado river direct into the Salton Sea, thru the C. D. company's canal; if it was shut off just for the purpose of seeing thousands upon thousands of 10, 20, 30, and 40 pound salmon flounder around in the mud and then die, and then fill the atmosphere for miles with a smell likened unto "Ordinance No. 4"; then, and in that event, somebody, somewhere, somehow, has committed an offense that Uncle Sam should not tolerate for a single second!

Each state in the Union, California in particular, is spending thousands of dollars annually to care for and propagate fish for food purposes, and yet here we have a California corporation deliberately killing them by the millions, for each adult salmon will spawn not less than 50,000 per annum. The same can be said of all the other species that have been killed by this simple process of damming up the Colorado so no fresh water could get to them—more cruel to the fish than using dynamite!

Mr. Chief Engineer Frisbie has started something that may not end

in a day. It will be recalled that I took a moving picture man with me and got a "shot" at the dam, the dead and dying fish, the "intake," the hydraulic dredger and the whole shootin' match. But I know nothing of the water being wasted into the Salton Sea. I hope it is not true; but, if it is, that dam should be damned forever—torn out by the roots and kept out.

It is the only time in the history of all these United States that a stream recognized by Uncle Sam as "navigable," has been allowed to be completely damned! It is the only stream in or touching California where the fish law has been so flagrantly violated. It is the only time it has ever been done on the Colorado, and probably the last time.

Let us all hope so!

EXPERTS TO INSPECT

THE ROOSEVELT DAM

PHOENIX, Sept. 29.—Time has come for the annual look-see of the eminent reclamation engineers, into the condition of the Roosevelt dam. D. C. Henny, consulting expert of the reclamation service, and E. H. Baldwin, assistant chief of construction, arrived from Denver yesterday and proceeded with Project Manager W. S. Cone to the dam.

In addition to giving the structure its scheduled inspection, Henny, the Portland Oregon engineer will look over the work on the sluicing tunnels which have recently undergone extensive revision in order to eliminate operating weaknesses. Henny is the man the government employs to go around and see that all the masonry and accessories of federal aid dams are in good working order. He visits Phoenix about once annually on this errand.

Mr. Baldwin was formerly supervising engineer of the Southern Irrigation district, until the abolition of engineering divisions.

GOV. HUNT WILL AID

IN SETTLING STRIKE

CLIFTON, Sept. 29.—Following conferences with mine managers and union men this afternoon, Governor Hunt stated that he would probably remain here until a settlement of the strike was effected, even if it should take several weeks. Clifton is now the temporary capital of the state.

The governor, accompanied by Private Secretary Ladd and Adjutant General Harris, arrived at Clifton yesterday morning at 10 o'clock, coming by auto from Lordsburg.

Miss Marie Miller, assistant clerk of the Board of Supervisors, is home from the coast.